

# Oregon Housing and Community Services Department

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## Community Services Programs

Funding from ARRA

### For More Information

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### Program Overview

AmeriCorps engages more than 75,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet community needs in education, the environment, public safety, homeland security, and other areas. Members serve with national nonprofit organizations like Habitat for Humanity, the American Red Cross, and Teach for America, as well as with hundreds of smaller community organizations, both secular and faith-based. Other members serve with AmeriCorps\*NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), a team-based residential program for adults 18 to 24 years old, or in low-income communities with AmeriCorps\*VISTA.

In exchange for a year of service, AmeriCorps members earn an education award that can be used to pay for college or to pay back qualified student loans. AmeriCorps is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, which also oversees Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America. It is part of USA Freedom Corps, a White House initiative to foster a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility, and help all Americans answer the President's Call to Service.

In Oregon this year, 849 full and part-time AmeriCorps members of all ages and backgrounds are serving communities across the state through local nonprofits, schools, local governments, religious organizations and other groups. They are tutoring children, coordinating volunteer programs, providing risk prevention presentations, removing nonnative species, performing trail and stream bank restorations and accomplishing other goals to improve our communities.

### ARRA Funding

ARRA provides additional resources nationally for Community Services programs totaling \$201 million "to put approximately 16,000 additional AmeriCorps members to work doing national service, meeting needs of vulnerable populations and communities during the recession." \$160 million of this amount will fund AmeriCorps programs directly, \$40 million will fund education for AmeriCorps volunteers, and \$1 million will be for the Inspector General.

For Oregon, this represents an allocation of \$366,326 for AmeriCorps programs and \$1,410,000 for AmeriCorps VISTA. This funding will provide funding for roughly 30 additional AmeriCorps members and 47 VISTA volunteers.

In addition, OHCS (Oregon Volunteers!) has applied for additional competitively awarded ARRA Volunteer funds. (The application requested \$406,749 to support an additional 34 members.)

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### Eligibility

Funding is limited to current AmeriCorps programs.

### Other Requirements/Criteria

Volunteers will work with anti-poverty organizations in communities across the state. AmeriCorps member activities will include financial planning, home foreclosure and housing assistance, housing rehabilitation and access, volunteer generation and management, and food security. VISTA members will work in asset-building and micro-enterprise development, capacity building in native and low income communities, college readiness and college student engagement in communities.

### Implementation Process/Steps

The Oregon Volunteers Commission will oversee the allocation to various AmeriCorps programs. The Corporation for National and Community Service state office will oversee the allocation of the VISTA positions.

*Last updated 4/10/09*

OHCS is the state housing finance agency, providing financial and program support to create and preserve opportunities for quality, affordable housing for lower income Oregonians. The agency also administers federal and state antipoverty, homeless and energy assistance community service programs.



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